

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L ATHENS 5805

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MILI, GR, TU, US

SUBJECT: MINISTER OF DEFENSE AVEROFF COMMENTS ON
AEGEAN PROBLEM AND CYPRUS

1. IN THE COURSE OF A GENERAL DISCUSSION I HAD WITH
MINISTER OF DEFENSE AVEROFF JULY 31, HE EXPRESSED SOME
VIEWS ON THE AEGEAN DISPUTE BETWEEN GREECE AND TURKEY.
HE TOLD ME THAT IN HIS OPINION ALL THE COMPONENT PARTS
OF THAT OVERALL PROBLEM ARE SUSCEPTIBLE TO PEACEFUL
SETTLEMENT. AS AN EXAMPLE, HE POINTED TO THE JUST COMPLETED
"ROUND TWO" OF THE AEGEAN AIR SPACE TALKS (ATHENS 5669)
AND CHARACTERIZED IT AS A POSITIVE DEVELOPMENT WHICH HAD
CONSTITUTED TRUE PROGRESS. HE ADDED THAT GREECE HAD MADE
A SIGNIFICANT NUMBER OF CONCESSIONS IN THE COURSE OF
THOSE TALKS AND THAT THE CONSEQUENT FORWARD MOVEMENT IN
THE TALKS HAD JUSTIFIED ITS ATTITUDE.

2. HE THEN DEVELOPED HIS THEME FURTHER BY TELLING
ME THAT HE HAD MADE A SPECIAL POINT SEVERAL NIGHTS PREVI-
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OUSLY ON THE OCCASION OF A GATHERING OF FOREIGN MILITARY

ATTACHES TO TAKE ASIDE SEVERAL TURKISH MILITARY OFFICERS AND ENGAGE THEM IN CONVERSATION. HE STRESSED TO THEM THE BASIC GOOD WILL THAT GREECE HOLDS TOWARDS TURKEY AND HE EXPRESSED TO THEM HIS OWN PERSONAL INTEREST AND THAT OF THE FOF IN RESOLVING THE AEGEAN PROBLEM. HE ALSO POINTED OUT TO THEM, HE TOLD ME, THAT THERE COULD, HOWEVER, BE NO SATISFACTORY SOLUTION TO THE AEGEAN DIFFICULTIES UNLESS THERE WAS REALIZED A JUST SOLUTION TO THE CYPRUS PROBLEM.

3. AT THIS POINT, I NOTED TO AVEROFF THAT I HAD THE IMPRESSION THAT PRIME MINISTER CARAMANLIS SEEMED TO FEEL THAT THE REAL KEY TO SUCH A CYPRUS SOLUTION LAY IN THE PERCENTAGE ARRANGEMENT, I.E., WHAT PERCENT OF LAND THE TURKISH CYPRIOTS WERE ALLOWED TO CONTROL. AVEROFF CONCURRED GENERALLY IN MY OBSERVATION BUT THEN WENT ON TO ASSERT THAT THERE WERE "TWO FUNDAMENTAL" FACTORS NECESSARY FOR A CYPRUS SETTLEMENT. FIRST, HE STATED, THE SETTLEMENT WOULD HAVE TO SATISFY THE "SENSE OF DIGNITY" OF THE GREEK NATION: IT MUST BE SOMETHING WITH WHICH THE GREEKS CAN LIVE WHILE KEEPING THEIR "RESPECT." SECONDLY, THE RESULT OF THIS SETTLEMENT MUST BE SUCH THAT THE GREEK MAJORITY ON CYPRUS WOULD EMERGE WITH THE ABILITY TO LEAD PRODUCTIVE AND HAPPY LIVES. IN THIS CONNECTION, HE STATED THAT THE GREEK CYPRIOTS--WHO HAD BEEN A MAJORITY FOR 3,000 YEARS--CAN NOT NOW BECOME A MINORITY. REVERTING THEN TO MY EARLIER OBSERVATION ON "PERCENTAGES", AVEROFF STATED THAT IN HIS OPINION, "TWENTY-FIVE PERCENT" WOULD CONSTITUTE A FIGURE WHICH THE GREEKS SHOULD BE ABLE TO LIVE WITH.

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